

## XII.—Ethnological Notes.

### A Dayak Song.

THE following song (*lagu*) was taken down in a Sea-Dayak house near the head-waters of the Oya River (Sarawak). It is sung, or perhaps rather hummed, without accompaniment in a monotone by four or five unmarried Dayak girls. Standing one behind the other they move slowly round in a circle, beating time with their feet and waving their arms in graceful movements. The girl in front leads the *lagu*, which can go on indefinitely; it is not sung straight through, as she may select any two lines and repeat the same several times in succession.

Like other Dayak songs, it is practically impossible to translate; several words are inserted which have no meaning, as they are brought in solely for rhyming purposes; these usually end in "n" or "ng," and enable the singers to produce the humming effect by dwelling on these consonants. Other words belong to an old language which is only kept alive in such songs as these, and to most Dayaks they are now meaningless; in some cases, no one at all can suggest a translation.

1. Undang jangut Undang.
2. Kuku gramar batang.
3. Undai jangut Undai.
4. Kuku gramar sungai.
5. Sugu gaiu, ulu Mugang.
6. Untun munyun tiup daun.
7. Tapis nawan, tapai nabai.
8. Intabar unti mulai.
9. Injang sanyan, injang saja.
10. Dikor nabau dikor sawar.
11. Dikor sawar tedong.
12. Kelong besai nampar.
13. Ingjin niok ingjin.
14. Dudi jadi dhulu ingjin.
15. Inja niok inja.
16. Dudi jadi dhulu darah.

1. "The beard of the prawns."
2. "The claws of the prawns that live in the wood in the river-bed."

3. "The beard of the prawns."
4. "The claws of the prawns that live in the river."
5. "The musical instruments made with a comb used in the head-waters of the Mugang."
6. "The insect *munnyun* blows on the leaves."
- 7 & 8. These lines are in the old language. The Dayaks themselves do not know the meaning.
9. "Shaking *sanyan*, shaking only."
10. "The place of the dragon, the place of the python."
11. "The place of the cobra."
12. "The large circle made of them can be seen."
- 13, 14, 15, 16. "Before they were only in love;  
"Now they are married to one another."

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**"Ulid Puoad" and "Pasang Salang"; Customs observed  
at Death among the Bisayas of Sarawak.**

The following notes were collected on some recent visits up the Limbang River, Northern Sarawak:—

**"ULID PUOAD."**

The corpse is laid on a bier resting on six gongs, which in turn rest on another bier supported by four cannon lying on the ground.

The feet of the corpse must point towards the West, as the Bisayas believe that the souls of the dead abide in the place where the sun sets; they point the feet of the dead in that direction so that the soul, on leaving the body, shall have a straight road to travel on; the body is also buried in this position.\*

The husband of the dead woman (or *vice versa*) may not leave the house for forty † days, *i. e.* may not sleep in any other house; this, however, is mitigated slightly in this way:—

"For fourteen † days the mourner may not leave the

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\* [Compare the Christian custom of burying the dead in the opposite direction, so that on rising they may face the East, where, from a westerner's point of view, Christ appeared. Like many other customs in the Christian religion, it has been borrowed, probably, from older Pagan ideas and adopted to suit the requirements of the newer religion. As a relic of sun-worship we may remember that Christ is called "the Sun of Righteousness."—Ed.]

† I am informed that the number of days has no particular significance nowadays; it is simply the old custom.